



WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

IMBERHORNE SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Martin Brown

Compassion

Achievement

Respect

Endeavour

The cornerstones of our learning community

16th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are about to enter the last week of this half term in what has been a fairly challenging period in the life of the school. I am extremely grateful for the efforts made by staff at the school, they have all gone above and beyond as we continue to manage our school sites. Despite having to organise working in a multitude of different rooms, supervise outdoor spaces and teach their classes, whilst providing guidance for students not in school, they remain relentlessly optimistic. All this against a backdrop of much uncertainty; everyone carries worries about their health as well as the health and welfare of their families. Maintaining social distancing whilst trying to stretch and challenge one's classes introduces a difficult dynamic in the classroom. The commitment from all staff in the school is really impressive, they cannot help but give their all.

My thanks also go to parents and carers who support us at this time. We do not get everything right all of the time, but we listen to feedback and continue to adapt and change what we do to try and make school as positive as we can. Your feedback always comes with supportive comments.

We wait with interest to see the details surrounding exams planned for the summer of 2021. Moving exams back a few weeks creates some additional teaching time. We are conscious though that there is still much to cover and revisit in what is already a short time frame. Students in Year 11 and Year 13 are undertaking a range of assessments as we try to get an accurate picture about current performance. Students cannot be complacent and must be prepared to apply themselves wholeheartedly in the weeks ahead. It will feel very pressured for them all at present.

We are currently experimenting with some software that will enable us to run virtual parents' consultation evenings, this software creates video appointments with staff. Our initial trials have been very successful and we plan to launch this with parents soon.

Three matters have been raised with us recently. The first is to do with food in the canteen, particularly at the Lower School site. Parents have raised concerns about not enough hot food being available at lunchtime. We know that in fact plenty of food is available but not always in the right locations. It is difficult to identify where the greatest need will be because this changes according to our offer. We are therefore exploring a food ordering app which will enable students and/or parents to order from the published menu. We hope to have this up and running shortly after we return in November.

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It has been pointed out to me that there is a slight disconnect between school and the wider community with regards to mask wearing and purchasing food. Beyond school, when entering a take-away, one must wear a mask. In school this is not currently the case when students enter our canteen to purchase food. When queuing for food, students are often grouped closely together and can be in close proximity to duty staff and our canteen staff. We are now asking that when queuing and collecting food students wear masks inside the buildings. I know this will reassure many colleagues who currently feel particularly vulnerable at these times. This will take effect from Monday 19th October.

Finally, with the need for additional ventilation, we are aware that our buildings feel colder than normal. As we move towards the winter months this will only become more pronounced. We are therefore looking at providing an Imberhorne hoodie. In addition to our existing uniform, this may be worn inside the building and should help students keep warm. We understand that this may be seen as an unnecessary addition when students can wear their own hoodies and coats, I am however constantly reminded about the equity of ensuring all students wear the same uniform. It saves some individuals from feeling self-conscious about what they wear and avoids unhelpful comparisons. We will provide further details about this soon.

After the good news story of last week about an ex-student, I am delighted to share another success this week. Lucy Stone in Year 13 has been commended by the judges in the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Awards. Lucy, along with other commended young poets was selected from over 6,000 entrants and over 15,000 poems from across the world. It is an amazing achievement we are delighted for Lucy and very proud of her success.

Yours faithfully

Mr M Brown
Headteacher